

MEXICO | this month | August

# MEXICO / *this month*

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## OF SPECIAL INTEREST

**Tuesday 13** — Commemoration of the 435th anniversary of the fall of Tenochtitlán, capital of the Aztec Empire, and of its heroic defense by Cuauhtémoc, last Aztec Emperor.

**Tuesday 13 to Friday 16** — The *Velas de Agosto*, in Juchitán, Oaxaca, are a series of colorful folklore festivals. They attract many visitors to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec to witness the regional dances and admire the craft art products typical of the area.

**Tuesday 20** — Anniversary of the Battle of Churubusco, fought in 1847 during the American invasion.

**Wednesday 21** — Anniversary of the martyrdom of Cuauhtémoc. Indian dances around his monument at the intersection of Av. Insurgentes and Paseo de la Reforma.

**Beginning Saturday 24** — and lasting throughout September, the city of Torreón, Coahuila, will celebrate its Golden Jubilee and its 1957 Cotton Fair. Every type of entertainment will be offered, including military horsemanship, swimming contests, opera, rodeos, and an international friendship fiesta.



**Every Sunday** — Open-air art exhibit in Sullivan Park. (See Art.)

**History of the Quartet** — Concerts by the Hungarian Quartet. (See Music for dates and programs).

**All Month** — Francisco Goitia's exhibit continues in the Alameda. (See Art).

# Preview

## WHAT TO SEE, WHERE TO GO IN AUGUST

### IN THIS ISSUE

Follow Cortés through Mexico, laugh with the Totonac figurines and relax with "veracruzano" music... next month report on Mexico City.



### FIESTAS & SPECTACLES

**Nogales, Veracruz, Aug. 1-31.** Religious celebration in honor of the town's patron saint. The spectacular dance of *Los Voladores* is a featured part of the entertainment.

**Teztlutlan, Puebla, Aug. 10-16.** Another religious festival centering around the *Día de la Asunción*, Aug. 15, which attracts visitors from the neighboring state of Veracruz as well. Bullfights, regional dances, including *Los Voladores*.

**Oxkutzcab, Yucatán, Aug. 10-16.** Traditional fair celebrating the *Asunción*; par-

ticularly notable for the *vaquerías*, during which the ever popular *Jarana Yucateca* is danced tirelessly. Bullfights in improvised rings.

**Milpa Alta, D. F. Aug. 10-17.** Annual fiesta of the *Asunción*; typical and colorful. Horse races, *jaripeos*, sports events, regional and popular dances, and musical concerts.

**Zacatlán, Puebla, Aug. 10-20.** Apple Fair, so-called because it coincides with

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the harvesting of apples, one of the chief crops of the area. *Verbenas* in the main plaza, popular music and dances.

Ocozacoautla, Chiapas, Aug. 12-16. Popular fair with sporting events, fireworks, and regional dances featuring that of the *Moros y Cristianos*.

Pallizada, Campeche, Aug. 15-31. Agricultural and livestock fair; prizes awarded for the best products in each class. Fireworks, regional dances, etc.

Tapachula, Chiapas, Aug. 20-30. Fiesta honoring St. Augustine. Religious ceremonies in the colonial churches; bullfights, cockfights, sports events, and dances executed by Chamula Indians.

Seyé, Yucatán, Aug. 23-25. Celebration in honor of St. Bartholomew. Bullfights, typical Yucatecan music, *vaquerías*.

Zacatecas, Zac. Aug. 27-29. Traditional annual fair in this mining center. Good hotel accommodations, restaurants and travel facilities.

## ART

Central de Arte Moderno, Av. Juárez 4. Permanent collective exhibit of the works of Siqueiros, Beteta, Charlot, Rivera, Tamayo, Dr. Atl and others.

Galería Antonio Souza, Génova 61-2. Oils by Juan Soriano.

Galería de Arte Mexicano, Milán 15. Oils by the young Mexican painter Luis García Guerrero.

Galería de Artes Plásticas de la Ciudad de México, pergola in the Central Alameda. Exhibition of works of Francisco Goitia and Luis Filzcer continues.

Galería de Artistas Unidos, S. A., Londres 87, upstairs. Permanent collective exhibit by members. Paintings, engravings, sculpture, lithography. Monthly auction.

Galerías Diana, Paseo de la Reforma 489. Sketches by Fernando Belayn. Until August 10, paintings by Jean-Himbert.

Galería Diego Rivera, Ignacio Mariscal 70. Permanent exhibition of works of Diego Rivera. Sale of paintings and sketches, old and recent.

Galería Metropolitana de Arte, Havre 10. Collective exhibit by young artists.

Galería Proteo, Génova 39, upstairs. Until August 6, canvases by the painter España. From August 8 to Sept. 4, latest works of Alberto Gironella.

Galerías Chapultepec, at the entrance to Chapultepec Park, near the Monument to the Niños Héroes. Works of new and established artists: painting, sculpture, engraving, ceramics, lithography and craft arts.

Galerías Excelsior, Reforma 18. Paintings, with works by Sornbierer Stizia.

Galerías PEMEX, Av. Juárez 89. Col-

MEXICO CITY



lective exhibit of the best works by students of La Esmeralda and the San Carlos Academy.

**Galerías Romano, José María Marroqui**  
5. Anniversary celebration, with a collective exhibit by leading painters and sculptors.

**Instituto de Arte de México, Puebla 141.**  
Collective exhibit, including works of Vita Castro, Feliciano Peña, Angelina Beloff, Ernesto Lugo and others.

**Jardín del Arte, in Sullivan Park, near the Monument to Motherhood.** Exhibition, sale and execution in the open air by young artists sponsored by the Mexican National Youth Institute.

**Museo Nacional de Artes e Industrias Populares, Av. Juárez 44.** Permanent exhibit of popular applied arts, including ceramics, glassware, wooden articles, fabrics.

**Museo Nacional de Artes Plásticas, Palace of Fine Arts.** Permanent exhibition of the works of pre-Cortesian, colonial, modern and contemporary artists. Murals by Rivera, Tamayo, Orozco and Siqueiros. In the Sala de Amistad Internacional and

various other salons, works of Mexicans and foreigners. These exhibits change each month.

**Museo Nacional de Historia, in Chapultepec Castle.** Permanent exhibition of Mexican art and history.

## THEATER

**Viaje de un Largo Día hacia la Noche.**

*Long Day's Journey into Night*, the autobiography of Eugene O'Neill, presented in theater-in-the-round. Isabela Corona stars, supported by August Benedico, Jorge del Campo, José Alonso and Nancy Cárdenas. Directed by Xavier Rojas; produced by Mary Martínez. Teatro El Granero, behind the National Auditorium on Paseo de la Reforma. 20-85-45. Daily at 8:30 pm; Saturdays, 7:15 and 9:45 pm; Sundays, 5 and 8 pm; closed Mondays.

**Ana Karenina — Leon Tolstoi's drama;** adaption by Seki-Sano based on the Art Theater of Moscow's version. María Douglas plays *Ana*. Directed by Seki-Sano. Teatro del Músico, Plaza de la República and Vallarta. 46-92-52. Daily at 8 pm; Saturdays at 7:15 and 9:45 pm; Sundays at 5 and 8 pm.

**Un Cuarto Lleno de Rosas — Comedy** by Edith Somers, marking the Mexican debut of Spanish actress Amparo Rivelles. Presented by Manolo Fábregas, producer and director. Teatro de los Insurgentes, Insurgentes 1587. 24-58-91. Daily at 8:30 pm; Saturdays, 7:15 and 9:45 pm; Sundays, 5 and 8 pm.

**Los Tulipanes Rojos — Produced** by Eduardo Fajardo. With Andrés Soler, who also directs, and Magda Guzmán. Sala Chopin, Insurgentes and Puebla. 11-38-17. Daily at 8 pm; Saturdays, 7:15 and 9:45 pm; Sundays, 5 and 8 pm.

**Requiem a una Monja — Gertrude Stein's Requiem for a Nun** is produced by Ernesto Alonso and Rita Macedo who, with Anita Blanch, also take part in the play. Directed by Fernando Mendoza. Teatro Sullivan, Sullivan 25. 46-07-72. Daily at 7:15 and 9:45 pm; Sundays, 5 and 8 pm.

## MUSIC

**The History of the Quartet — Concert series** presented by the famous Hungarian Quartet, composed of Zoltan Szekely, first violinist; Alexander Moskowsky, second violin; Denes Koromzay, viola; Gabor Magyar, cello. In the Palace of Fine Arts at 9 pm:

Aug. 1, *Beethoven*: Quartet No. 9, Op. 59; Quartet No. 11, Op. 95; Quartet No. 14, Op. 131.

Aug. 2, *Romantic Period*: Quartet No. 14, *La Muerte y la Doncella*, by Schubert; Quartet No. 2, Op. 51 by Brahms; Quartet No. 6, Op. 96 *Americano* by Dvorak.

Aug. 5, *Contemporary Period*: Quartet, Op. 10 by Debussy; Quartet No. 2, Op. 17 (1917) by Bartok; Quartet No. 5, (1943) by Hindemith.

**University Symphony Orchestra — 1957 Season.** Concerts on Sundays, August 4, 11, 18 and 25, at 11:45 am, in the Palace of Fine Arts. Directors: José F. Vázquez and Gira Zdravkovich, Leslie Hodge and Russell Wiley. Bach Chorus and the University Choral Society.

**Violin Recitals — by Robert Kitain,** at 9 pm, on August 9, 16 and 23. Fine Arts Palace.

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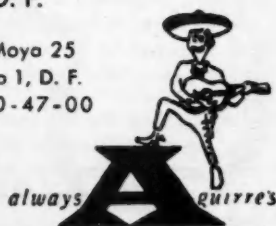
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### How to Enjoy Your Mexican Trip

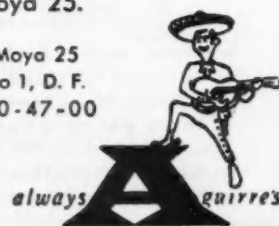
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**Piano Recital** — by Ann Schein, at 9 pm on August 15. Fine Arts auditorium.

**Chamber Music** — Concert by the Chamber Orchestra of the National University of Mexico, August 19 at 9 pm. Palace of Fine Arts.

**Paganini Quartet** — Special program under the direction of José Sabre Marroquín; August 24 and 27, at 9 pm. Palace of Fine Arts.

**Conservatory Concert** — August 20 at 9 pm, in the auditorium of Fine Arts Palace.

## SPORTS

**Baseball** — Social Security Stadium, Av. Cuauhtémoc and Calzada del Obrero Mundial. Season of the Class AA Mexican Baseball League. Games to be played in the capital during the month:

Aug. 24, Monterrey v. Mexico City Rojos.

Aug. 6-8, Nuevo Laredo v. Mexico City Tigres.

Aug. 9-11, Monterrey v. Tigres.

Aug. 13-18, Veracruz v. Rojos.

Aug. 20-25, Mérida v. Tigres.

Aug. 27- Sept. 1, Rojos v. Tigres.

**Basketball** — Major League championship tournament, in the Law Gymnasium on San Ildefonso near the Zócalo. Games on Tuesdays and Fridays at 6:30 pm, beginning August 20. Admission three pesos.

**Boxing** — Arena Coliseo, Perú 77. Fights on Wednesdays and Saturdays at 9 pm. Main event, two semi-finals and several preliminary bouts.

**Frontón (Jai-Alai)** — Frontón México, Plaza de la República, across from the Monument to the Revolution. Games every day except Wednesday, beginning at 6 pm. Admission, 4 and 8 pesos.

Frontón Colón, Ignacio Ramírez 15. Games daily except Thursday, from 4 pm.

**Swimming** — National Water Polo championship, Aug. 13-18, at either the Chapultepec Sports Club or the Olympic pool at University City. See newspapers for details.

**Tennis** — Chapultepec Sports Club. National Father and Son championship tourney sometime during the month. Specific data will appear in the press as soon as available.

**Wrestling** — Arena Coliseo, Perú 77. Matches every Friday at 8:30 pm, and Sundays at 5 pm.

## HORSES

**Races** — Hipódromo de las Américas, Lomas de Sotelo, D. F. Races every Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, beginning at 2 pm. On Sunday 4: First Santa Susana Classic, for two-year-old fillies, 6 furlongs; 25,000-peso added purse.

**Charros** — Every Sunday morning at 11 am, the various charro associations hold practice sessions open to the public free of charge, in the following ranches:



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Rancho La Tapatia, Calzada del Molino del Rey on the eastern rim of Chapultepec Park.

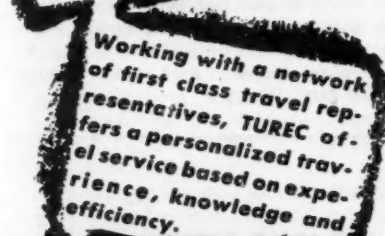
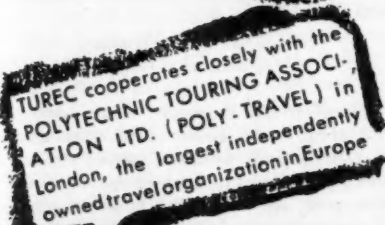
Rancho del Charro, on Av. Ejército Nacional.

Rancho Grande La Villa, entering from the Laredo highway.

Rancho Santa Anita, Santa Anita, D. F.

## BULLFIGHTS

Plans and schedules are most indefinite. We suggest you consult your travel agent after your arrival in Mexico City.



## August Suitcase

Veracruz is a big state with a lot to do, and to exploit all of its possibilities you may need a steamer trunk instead of a suitcase. It is almost completely tropical and, unless you plan to climb the 18,000-plus feet of Orizaba, bring light cotton clothes — and a nylon raincoat for the sudden drenching tropical downpours.

Fishing all along the coast is magnificent. There are big tarpon in the rivers and lagoons as well as snook and snapper. You can rent gear, but if you are an avid fisherman, fill your suitcase with lures and bring a spinning outfit for the lagoons and reefs.

Don't bother to pack a topé unless you have one left over from Africa. They sell endless varieties of straw hats that are light and cool, and after a couple of days adjust to the peculiarities of your head as if they had been tailored to fit that day's haircut.

### Hunting is at its best in Veracruz.

There are the big and cunning tigre, small, soft-eyed deer, as well as wild turkey and jabali. So pack a gun or two if you're a hunter — but best write a guide (we suggest Col. Tex Purvis at Av. Juárez 64-1109, Mexico City) for full information.

Night life is casual in Veracruz, and a sports outfit will take you anywhere. Include a light but long-sleeved shirt for late evening when it cools, or after a hard rain. The female tourist



can pick up a filmy rebozo to cover bare arms and shoulders against sun or chill. A sweater, for occasional crispness at night, is a good idea too.

And remember your bathing suits. There are miles of beaches and many of the hotels have swimming pools also.

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There are some traffic signs along several busy blocks of Avenida de los Insurgentes which read in translation: Momentary Parking — Limited to 30 Minutes. We congratulate the author of this regulation, first for his stern intention in dealing with a problem, and second for his astute afterthought on how long it takes people hereabouts to get anything done instantaneously.

We are now ready to come to swords' points with the wedding invitation, which, in the guise of granting a privilege, has become a demand for a gift whether you accept the invitation or not. This extortion is no longer limited to intimate friends who could be counted on as willing, or at least forgiving but is practiced on every luckless acquaintance no matter how far removed. And the parties at interest have long memories before wedding time.

In lamenting this perversity with a friend of ours, a lady who had also been long victimized, we were told an amusing story. A few weeks before, her mail had included a wedding invitation, and although she did not recognize any of the names engraved thereon she hurried out to buy the usual sterling salad servers and mailed them off the same day. That night she told her husband what she had done for presumed friends of his, but it turned out that even he had never heard of them. They recovered the outer envelope from a wastebasket and found that the invitation had been left in their mailbox by mistake. Sure enough, our friend eventually got a note of thanks from the unknown bride ... in the language used in writing to only a vaguely remembered cousin.

You have heard of grown-ups chasing rainbows, and children chasing butterflies. We know a Scottie name Smoking who spends his days in Cuernavaca chasing butterflies' shadows. This pursuit is delightful to grown-ups, children, and Smoking, alike. Angus

## Letters

### KEEPING IN TOUCH

...We continue to enjoy MTM immensely — our thanks to the entire staff for such a wonderful job. We've yet to find a dull article in any issue, and we have them all the way back to Vol. I, No. 1. MTM is our only means right now of really keeping in touch with Mexico until such time as we can plan another trip down.

Doris F. Hallas  
Florissant, Mo.

### NO PROGRESS

...Your very interesting and informative article on the National Lottery, which appeared in the April 1956 issue of MTM, was used by the writer as subject for a talk given before my Toastmasters group. As an advocate of the lottery, I confess very little progress has been made here.

Harold A. Maas  
Seattle, Wash.

### COMMON MALADY

...I believe it was in March I renewed my subscription and also subscribed for one year for my aunt, Mrs. Florence Petty, in Honolulu, Hawaii. She has written me that so far she has just received the March issue, and I especially asked for hers to start

with the February issue on Guadalajara... You may be pleased to know that it has made a great hit in the Islands and already many are talking of coming here to live.

Mrs. James W. Saunders  
Guadalajara, Jalisco

*Communications with Hawaii must be exceptionally uncertain; however, we are sending Mrs. Petty additional copies of the February and other missing numbers. We shudder to think of their effect on the Islands, however. If just one issue has inspired the people there with the desire to move to Mexico, five or six issues may produce a wholesale exodus!*

### CULINARY ENTHUSIASM

...Besides rekindling the desire to return pronto to Mexico, this current MTM (July 1957) arouses a desire for the quoted cookbook, *Recetas Prácticas para la Cocina*. If it is possible for me to purchase a copy, would you kindly tell me where to write for it? and the price?

Joe Claire Webb  
Oklahoma City, Okla.

*Lacking the courage — as well as the time — to experiment with such a fascinating volume ourselves, we can't give you the desired information. However, we suggest you write direct to the lady who has obviously explored it thoroughly: Mrs. Maria de Robinson, Frontier Village, 2013 Ninth St., Douglas, Arizona. And watch yourself with that jabali!*

## MEXICO/ this month

Vol. III, No. 8 August 1957

EDITOR, Anita Brenner

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# person to person

Few places anywhere, even in Mexico, are so beautiful as that piece of our continent called Veracruz. Sweeping from the high, snow-peaked tablelands to the teeming and mysterious Gulf tropics, and fed by waterfalls and opulent rivers, there is practically no climate that can't be duplicated somewhere in Veracruz, and as a rule in dramatic juxtaposition: snow and gardenias, orchids and pine trees, almost, even, eagles and parakeets; as if nature had filled her hands and apron with everything rich, and poured it all out on these spectacular slopes.

So it is not surprising that when the Spanish invaders arrived on these shores they found a blithe, light-hearted people, gifted in music and the arts, quick-witted and nimble on their feet besides. As everywhere in Mexico, the inrush of colonizers, soldiers, pirates, and assorted dominators, blotted out the ancient way of life and for a while, all Mexicans were a sad people. Yet their vitality came through and today, the bridge between the Laughing Heads, mirroring the ancient Totonacs, published in this issue; and the pictures accompanying Joe Hellmer's description of Veracruz music, is very clear: obviously they're the same people all over again.

Of recent years *veracruzanos* have been prominent in public life as President and President-makers. The past three administrations have all stemmed from Veracruz and so, different as they have been individually, they do have in common the quality of wit, and a warm humanity.

In this issue we have attempted to give you Veracruz, highlighted in its most characteristic aspects, from ancient to modern, with a glimpse of the superb Papaloapan River project which embraces most of the state, and its neighbor Oaxaca.

Our middle of the magazine "map" this issue is our version of the much-disputed route taken by Cortés and his soldiers from the coast to the capital. A good deal of it is playground today, or agricultural land in the process of industrialization. Then, it was — but we refer you to our double-header account of the climb, put together by our own *Conquistador*

Conquest of Mexico: The Indian view. These pictures were drawn for Moctezuma by his military correspondents. Right, Malintzin, along with Cortés, captures Tenochtitlán.

Mr Olsen, in collaboration with Bernal Díaz, Cortés' grumpiest, and frankest, foot-soldier.

It has always amused and intrigued us to compare the Spanish accounts of



the Conquest, in which of course Cortés is the central figure, and the Indian accounts, of which the most famed is a Codex or picture-book called *El Lienzo de Tlaxcala*, now in the National Museum. It was made up of the picture-reports Moctezuma's scribes and spies sent back to their monarch, as they met and followed the strangers with their perhaps-divine mounts and their fire-belching weapons. In these pictures, of which we here reproduce a running sampling, Cortés is strictly secondary to the true Commander of the expedition, as the Indians experienced this event: that is, Malintzin, the Mexican slave girl who led, counselled, and maneuvered the Spaniards straight into the hated Emperor's palace. As a matter of fact the Indians did not know Cortés by any military name: they called him the Lord Malintzin.



According to the Indian code size meant importance. Above, Malintzin, followed by Cortés, accepts Tlaxcalan tribute. Below, Malintzin, at the side of Cortés, directs Tlaxcalan and Spanish warriors in battle.



## NATIONAL PANORAMA

As released to MTM by  
Bureau of Economic Research  
Nacional Financiera

The Nacional Financiera held its 23rd annual stockholders' meeting at the end of June, at which the highlights of another year of expanded operations were reviewed. Total resources channeled by the Institution in 1956 amounted to 7,174 million pesos, an increase of 13% over the total for 1955 (6,322 million pesos), in meeting the growing financial needs of Mexico's developing economy. These figures include the various forms of financial support provided by this official industrial bank and development corporation: principally direct medium-term credits, investments in capital stock and long-term obligations of enterprises, and endorsement of development loans from abroad from public and private sources.

Of Nacional Financiera's total financing at the close of 1956, nearly 90% was channeled to industrial enterprises, principally in basic manufacturing industries such as iron and steel, in promoting new industries and in chemicals, and motor vehicles. Transport, electric energy and the petroleum industry were also heavy beneficiaries.

The activity of Nacional Financiera raising funds within the country and abroad for basic development investments has been an important factor in making manufacturing one of the fastest growing sectors in the Mexican economy. Among successful Financiera-promoted enterprises can be listed Altos Hornos de México, Constructora Nacional de Carros de Ferrocarril, Diesel Nacional, Toyoda de México, Tubos de Acero de México and Celulosa de Chihuahua. The following are in initial stages of establishment: the Tuxtepec and the Michoacán paper factories, Monclova fertilizer plant and Montrose Mexicana in the chemicals field.

Last year Nacional Financiera issued the new Certificates of Industrial Coproprietorship, which bear a minimum fixed yield and permit holders to obtain dividends from four of the leading industrial firms in the country. During their first year, these Certificates yielded 8.5%.

## News and Comment

### find

The richest find in 20 years, according to spokesmen for the government-operated national oil industry, was made recently when exploration struck a new oil-producing belt about 100 miles up the Gulf coast from the port of Veracruz.

The area embraces Papantla, Tecolutla and Gutiérrez Zamora, containing 16 producing wells with a daily output of 19,000 barrels. Newest well, christened El Hallazgo ("The Find"), gives its name to the golden belt. El Hallazgo reached a depth of 10,411 feet and produces 1,100 barrels of light petroleum daily.

The new field brings the total of finds during the administration of President Ruiz Cortines (inaugurated in '52) to 63, with an overall picture of accelerated development and expansion of production.

### footwork in the air

The air — specifically, transport channels — over Mexico to and from the U.S. has been a subject of controversy for years; not to mention shoving, pushing, and a touch of the fine Renaissance hand now and then.

Reason for the controversy has been the rich, ever-increasing volume of travel, rising in some of the winter months to almost tidal wave proportions. This preserve has for a long time been the subject of grievances as between carrier and carrier but more especially as between Mexican and U.S. carriers, it having been the Mexican contention that a strictly bi-lateral policy be followed in the granting of routes and concessions.

A new treaty, negotiated by outgoing Ambassador Francis White, recently ratified both ways, established

this as a principle, whereupon the air over Washington and Mexico's capital at once became thick with a fine, rich Madison Avenue stew of promotions, pressures, combinations and, of course, deals consummated. Authorities in both cases took a long time to decide which routes were to go to who, obviously sifting carefully through every aspect of each line's capacity to perform.

As of early July, double routes — namely, one Mexican, one American, carrier — had been established on the following runs: New York-Mexico City, Los Angeles-Mexico City, Chicago-Mexico City, New Orleans-Mexico City, and runs from Washington and San Antonio.

The new giant in the Inter-American travel field, emerging as a result of very rapid footwork indeed, was *Aeronaves*, former President Miguel Alemán's brainchild. *Aeronaves* opened its publicity guns on the gilt-edged New York run by announcing the purchase of *Britannias*, equipped with just about everything any traveler might daydream up as the last word in glamor travel. Competitor: Air France with its famed champagne flights.

### experiment in international intimacy

Eighteen American students representing nine states of the Union are staying the months of July and August with Mexican families as part of a program to bring about greater understanding between the peoples of the neighboring countries. The students, men and women between the ages of 15 and 22, are split into two groups, one to stay in Jalapa and the other in Oaxaca. Both groups will make occasional field trips during their stay with their "adopted family."

The students are in Mexico under the auspices of the worldwide "Experiment in International Living" organization, headed in Mexico by Barbara Baer de Gómez.



# PAPALOAPAN

The new Miguel Alemán Dam near Temascal, Oaxaca, will back up water forming a lake 22 miles long by 9 miles wide.

Where once malaria-ridden villages lay half hidden in the jungle, open to every caprice of the Rio Tonto and isolated from the outside world, a lake is now slowly forming. When the water has been backed to capacity behind the new Miguel Alemán Dam, a body of water 22 miles long by 9 miles wide will be formed.

This is the first of five dams to be built in the Papaloapan Project, an immense area of mountains and rich valleys through which flow the Papaloapan River and its five tributaries. The project, begun under the regime of President Miguel Alemán, is in a

The inhabitants of the valley evolved the best type of construction for their climate and the Papaloapan Commission wisely adopted it when it built entire new villages for flooded-out peoples.



sense a Mexican TVA — but even more difficult, including as it does great stretches of jungle and forest, and many villages whose people live almost on the primitive level.

By 1958 the first generators should be completed, furnishing 150 thousand kilowatts — more than the states of Veracruz and Oaxaca, where the valley lies, now consume — and thus opening the way to industrialization.

In addition to the dams, roads have to be built. Malaria must be eliminated. The people must be educated in

(Continued on page 21)

Photos courtesy Papaloapan Commission.






## OF HUMAN LAUGHTER

*For many years archaeologists in Veracruz have been finding these ancient masks portraying laughter, and puzzling for an explanation. A recent find reveals what they were and what they meant. Fred Peterson's notes provided the basis for this story and the magnificent photographs published here, are also from his collection.*

For many years archaeologists specializing in ancient American civilizations have been picking up — mostly in the Veracruz region and usually brought to them by Indians — a type of mask that is probably unique in the world. It consists of a small, flat clay face, about half life-size, too flat to use as a mask, and characteristically always, smiling; the smile ranging from the enigmatic shadowy amusement famous as "the Gioconda Look"

to open mouth and utter merriment.

Many theories have been spun about these faces, some daydreamers even going so far as to say that they were death masks, the grin representing the spread of the features after the rigidity of death sets in. Since often, the headdresses on these faces have symbols on them — sometimes an animal, sometimes a simple hieroglyph, and often the  that MTM adopted as its "signature," (because it means sound and communication) — it was assumed that there are of course a religious association and function, and that the symbols stood for identity with this or that god, etc.

As often happens with elaborate

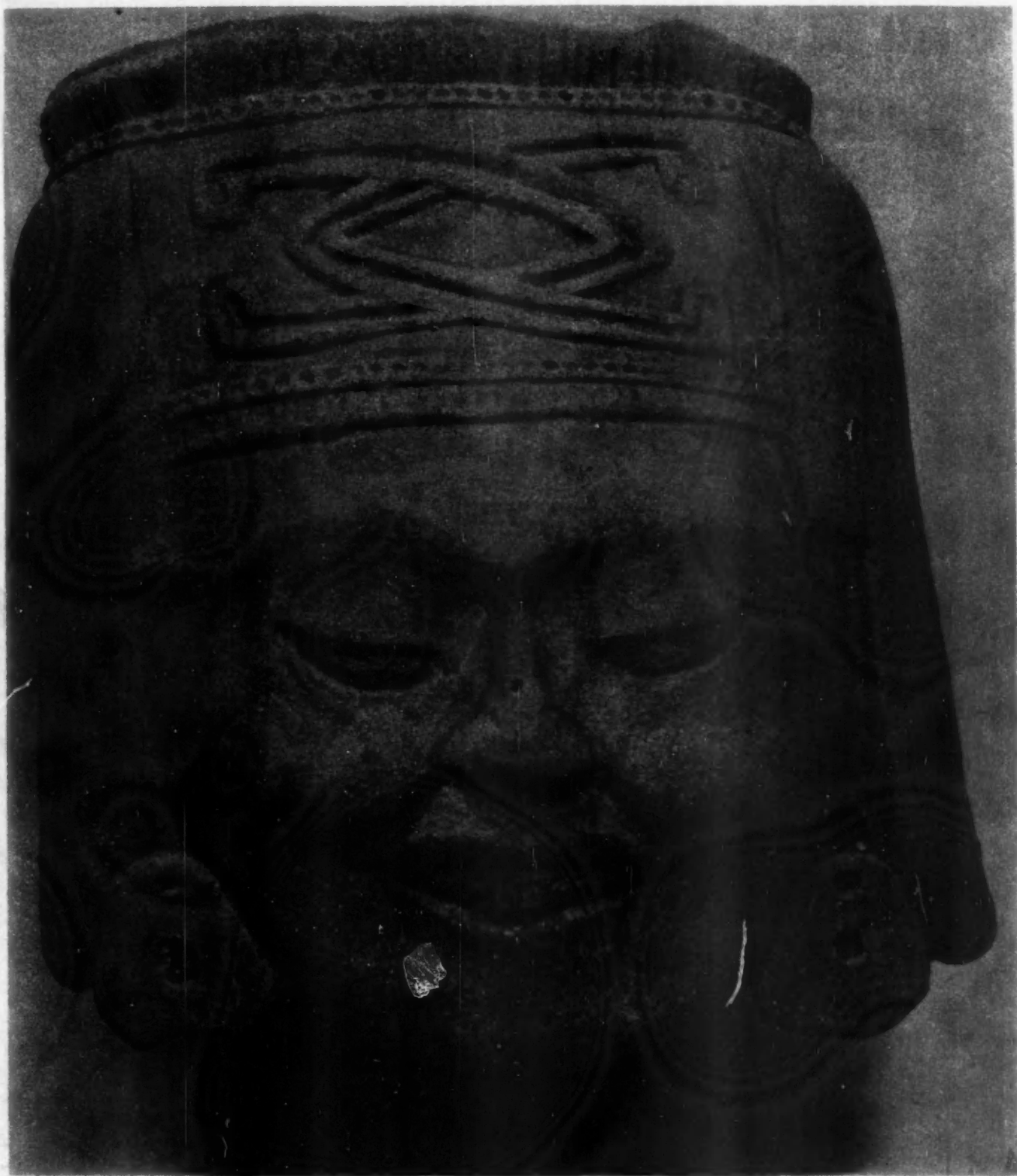
*(Continued on page 21)*



El Tajin, near the Veracruz town of Papantla, is one of the most impressive ruins of Mexico. The many niches are for deities each of which represents one day in the year or 52-year cycle. When the early sun rays fell on each particular niche, that signified what day it was. Thus the pyramid is also a sort of almanac and religious calendar.







All the teeth of the Totonac priests were filed away except the center two, top and bottom. The heads follow this theme and smile like two-year olds.

Photos F. A. Peterson

## trail of cortés

*This is a glimpse of the country through which a small, motley army of adventurers passed some four hundred years ago. The italic quotations in the story are from the journal of a battle-scarred infantryman who walked from Veracruz to the fabulous Aztec city of riches, Tenochtitlán. His name was Bernal Díaz del Castillo.*



Photo Armando Salas Portugal

by Toss Olsen

Primary colors bright with sun and music as elemental as the colors. Skeleton street cars with sun shades instead of glass. Open-air restaurants looking out from graceful arches to the sun-bright plaza. Mint juleps made with blends of rum, and tiny bottles of beer that stay cold. Miles of wind-swept beaches, and water like a luxurious heated pool. Sailors talking animated French, German or English to giggling girls. Chained ships straining at long new concrete piers.

Like San Francisco and New Orleans, Veracruz is a city with a strong personality. But here the smile is wider and the Spanish sings. Nowhere in Latin America are the people quicker to offer the stranger the intimate *tu* of the Spanish language.

This is the first city founded by Europeans on the American continent. Here Cortés stepped ashore, planted the Cross, rolled his cannon in, and

hospitable people and when the Spaniards first arrived they met them with fish and wild fowl, wild plums and cakes of maize, although the old chronicler Bernal Díaz speaks somewhat bitterly of hunting for shellfish and going fishing for the common soldiers' dinner. The seas are still rich with the seafood they found. Lobster, shrimp and oyster, as well as snook, red snapper and pampano, are served in most of the restaurants on the main square, and wherever there is a river ferry to wait for there will be a small *puesto* selling ready-made shrimp cocktails and oysters at ridiculously low prices.

Sport fishing is excellent. Record tarpon are taken in the lagoons and rivers all along the Veracruz coast. Fishing boats are for hire in the harbor, although the fishing grounds are outside the small but extremely busy port.

Now Mexico's most important seaport, the original harbor was unpro-



times after a violent storm — local people say — a fossilized timber, encrusted with coral, is thrust up from its grave and is easily identified in the clear water before it slowly sinks back under the sand.

*As far as I can make out, this mat-*

# trail of cortés

proclaimed all these lands the property of the Spanish Crown, naming this place "Rich Town of the True Cross."

On Holy Thursday, in the year of 1519, we arrived with all the fleet at the Port of San Juan de Ulúa, and as the Pilot Alaminos knew the place well from having come there with Juan de Grijalva he at once ordered the vessels to drop anchor where they would be safe from the Northerly gales. The flagship hoisted her royal standards and pennants and within half an hour of anchoring, two large canoes came out to us, full of Mexican Indians. . . . Then the Indians paid many marks of respect to Cortés, according to their usage, and bade him welcome, and said that their lord, a servant of the great Montezuma, had sent them to ask what kind of men we were and of what we were in search, and added that if we were in need of anything for ourselves or our ships. . . . that they would supply it.

Veracruzanos have ever been an

protected and it was because of this that the first settlement was abandoned in favor of establishing a base farther north at the mouth of the Chachalacas River. Later, the settlers returned to the original city on the site of the present Veracruz.

So Cortés agreed to it, although he pretended to need much begging, as the saying goes: "You are very pressing, and I want to do it." — and he stipulated that we should make him Chief Justice and Captain General, and the worst of all that we conceded was that we should give him a fifth of all the gold which should be obtained after the royal fifth had been deducted. . . . We at once set to work to found and settle a town which was called the "Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz."

About 20 miles north of Veracruz lie the ruins of the temples and pyramids of Cempoala. It was here that Cortés learned of the discontent in the Aztec Empire, and it was near here that he ordered his ships sunk. Some-

ter of destroying the ships which we suggested to Cortés during our conversation, had already been decided on by him, but he wished it to appear as though it came from us, so that if any one should ask him to pay for the ships, he could say that he acted on our advice and we would all be concerned in the payment.

There was no return now. Behind them the solitary sea and ahead the golden empire of the Aztec Federation. Even the ones who had clamored for a return to Cuba grumbled no more. The Totonacs were their allies and assured them that the Tlaxcalans, perennial enemies of the Aztecs, would rally to the Spanish flag. On August 16, 1519, the small band of Spaniards, along with some 40 Cempoalan warriors and a number of others to carry their artillery and baggage, set out for the capital of the Aztec Empire or "Mexican Federation", Tenochtitlán.

The climate has changed little over the years and the inland jungle, away from the cooling sea breezes, is still

(Continued on page 16)





Spaniards  
GO  
HOME

5

6

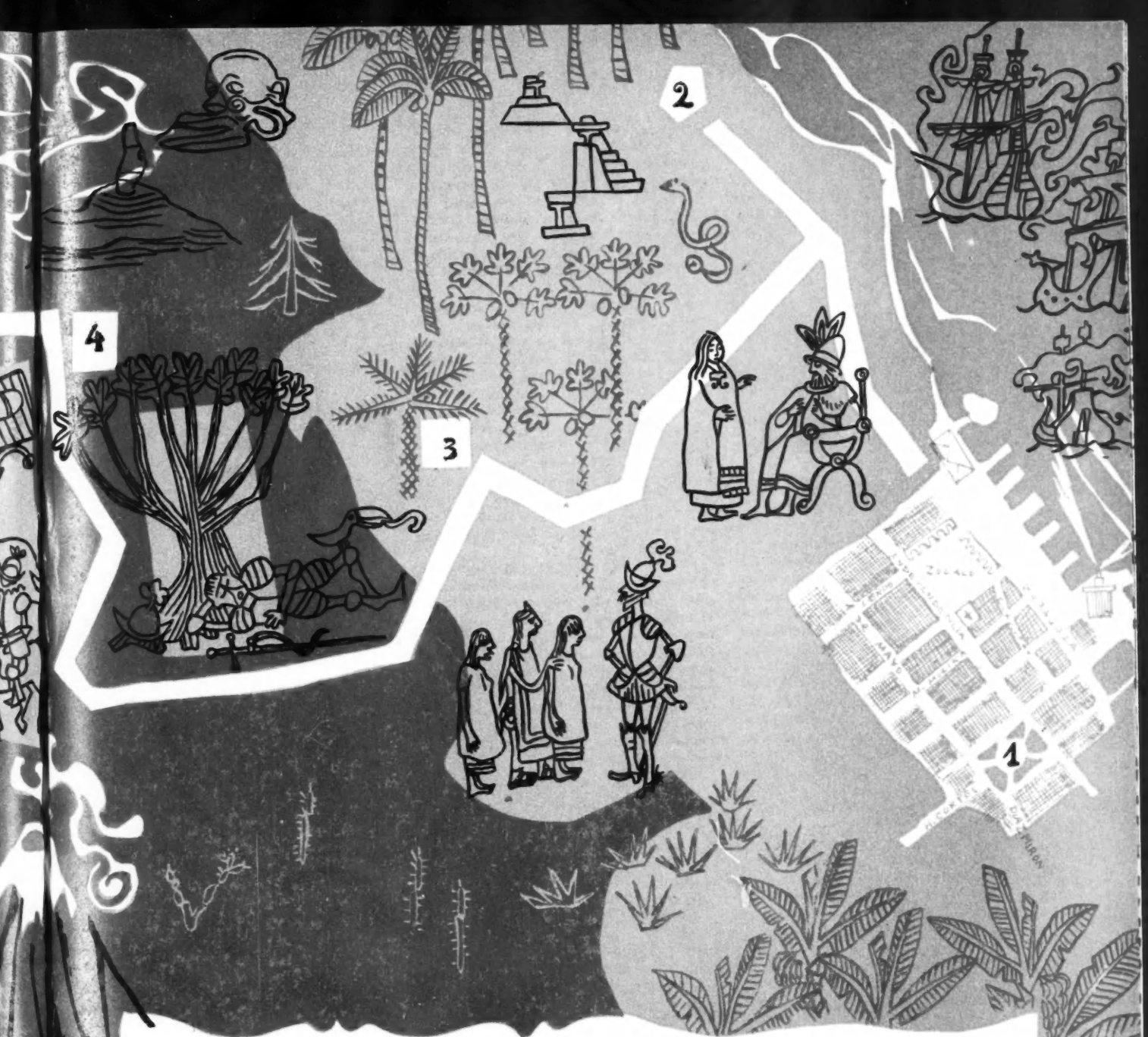
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## TRAIL OF CORTÉS. A MAP FOR INTREPID EXPLORERS. DRAWN FOR MEXICO/THIS MONTH BY VLADIMIRO R. MACHADO AND V.R. MACHADO JR.

1.- VERACRUZ: CORTÉS LANDED HERE. 2.- CHACHALACAS: WHERE CORTÉS SANK HIS SHIPS. 3.- JALAPA: CORTÉS RESTED HERE. 4.- PEROTE: FIRST STEP TO THE HIGHLANDS. 5.- ZAUTLA: MAY BE DÍAZ' CITY OF SKULLS. 6.- TLAXCALA: BATTLE FOR SURVIVAL - BOTH SIDES. 7.- CHOLULA: MASSACRE. 8.- PASO DE CORTÉS: THE INVADERS CROSSED HERE. 9.- AMECAMECA: THE VALLEY OF MEXICO SPREADS BELOW. 10.- CHALCO: INTRODUCTION TO TENOCHTITLÁN. 11.- TENOCHTITLÁN: CAPITAL OF THE AZTEC EMPIRE, TODAY MEXICO CITY.



## trail of cortés

(Continued from page 13)

a steaming green blanket of spine and tangled brush. However, malaria is disappearing now, and the once dreaded *vómito negro* is unknown.

Jalapa, the first city of any size along the route followed by the Spaniards, is higher, but still tropical. Flowers grow in profusion and the principal crops are papaya, tobacco and oranges.

As the trail winds up to the higher lands and mountain passes that sometimes show snow high on their slopes, the wind sweeps down, chilling the unwarned traveler still wearing the thin cotton of the tropics.

The modern paved highway skirts the southern edge of a huge crag of rock named Perote. Cars travel in minutes what the little Spanish army marched in days — but step off the highway and walk over the huge sheet of twisted rock. Then imagine 50 extra pounds of armor and shield, sword and spear. The *conquistadores* were adventurers, brutal and unscrupulous, but they were indeed men.

South, the peak of Orizaba towers above both high tableland and the low flat coastal plain of Veracruz. If the weather is clear the two enamored volcanos, Ixtacchhuatl and Popoca-



tepetl will emerge from the rim of the Valley of Mexico to the southwest. Palm has given away to pine, tropic has become temperate. And as the highway turns north and then east again, the pine changes to cactus and the air dries.

The main highway turns south and splits off to the left of the route that the Spaniards followed, although a secondary road leads into Zautla — believed to be the Zocotlán mentioned by Bernal Díaz.

I remembered that in the plaza where some of their chapels stood, there were piles of human skulls so regularly arranged that one could count them, and I estimated them at more than a hundred thousand. I repeat again that there more than one hundred thousand of them.

The highway junctions again at the village of Zacatepec and turns right to cut across the track of the *conquistadores* a few miles past Huamantla. It was near here that the army of 400-some-odd Spanish soldiers, Cempoalan warriors, and a few horses and mastiffs — as valuable as any infantryman — first met the Tlaxcalan Indians in pitched battle.

As it was now late the Tlaxcalans beat a retreat and we did not pursue them... We slept near a stream and with the grease from a fat Indian whom we had killed and cut open, we dressed our wounds, for we had no oil...

The next day as we marched on, two armies of warriors approached to give us battle. They numbered six thousand men and they came on us with loud shouts and the din of drums and trumpets as they shot their arrows and hurled their darts and acted like brave warriors...

Then Cortés shouted, "Santiago and at them!" and we attacked them with such impetuosity that we killed and wounded many of them with our fire and among them three captains. They then began to retire toward some ravines, where over forty thousand warriors and their captain general, named Xicotenga, were lying in ambush.

We were a full hour fighting in the fray and our shots must have done the enemy much damage for they were so numerous and in such close formation, that each shot must have hit many of them. Horsemen, musketeers, crossbowmen, swordsmen and those who used lance and shield, one and all, we fought like men to save our lives and to do our duty, for we were certainly in the greatest danger in which we had ever found ourselves...

When the Tlaxcalans saw that they could not beat the Spanish invaders they decided to join them — even to the extent of adopting the gods of the *teules*. The font where Xicotencatl, the blind, old king of the Tlaxcaltecan Republic, was baptized in 1521 is still preserved in the historic San Francisco Church in Tlaxcala.

The highway to Cholula by way of Huejotzingo is longer but it is the way



the Spaniards took, and besides, the little town is a good place to stretch legs and drink the best apple cider in Mexico.

Cholula is a small city now and, without being deserted, it gives the impression of a ghost town. And, in a way, it is. At one time it was the center of the Toltec kingdom, a thriving city of craftsmen and traders with close to 100,000 population; and it was an important religious center — there were some 400 temples and shrines. The Spaniards always built churches over native shrines, and in Cholula, this produced the boast of a church for every day of the year; so the overall impression of the city is one of cupolas and crosses.

At Cholula the trail leads up over a pass between the two volcanos and the only way to follow is by foot or on horseback as did the Spaniards. A highway reaches the pass Cortés used from the other side of the mountains, and cars have parked next to the television relay station where once the *conquistadores* filed by. The wind picks up a cold edge from the snow and ice of the mountains, but a few minutes drive on down the hill to Amecameca will take you to a couple of excellent restaurants equipped with hot soups, spicy Mexican foods and steaming-hot *café con leche* to drive the chill from your body.

The present-day highway follows the route of the conquerors more or less from the Paso de Cortés through Amecameca to Chalco and on to Ixtapala-



pa and Coyoacán where the southern causeway led out to the city on the lake that was Tenochtitlán.

*Gazing on such wonderful sights we did not know what to say or whether what appeared before us was real, for on one side on the land, there were great cities, and the lake itself was crowded with canoes, and in the causeway were many bridges at great intervals, and in front of us stood the great city of Mexico, and we — we did not even number four hundred soldiers!*

The city that Bernal Díaz saw at the end of the long climb from the sand and heat of Veracruz was indeed dazzling: houses and pyramids flashing white and many-colored in the sun and reflected in the blue waters of the lake that surrounded it. It must have been a beautiful city. It still is.



Photo Lowell Weeks

Domes of San Francisco at Cholula, city of churches. Below, the Cofre de Perote. Bernal Díaz stumbled over this rock.

Photo Armando Salas Portugal





## this is veracruz

by José R. Hellmer

Veracruz is a land of telluric and celestial fire. Green, fragrant heat rises tremulously from the earth, cut in midair by the clean flame of the tropic sun. The color and rhythm of this dual fire is defined and enriched by the never-ceasing caresses of the ocean.

The music of this magic land is the perfect and spontaneous synthesis of this fiery harmony. The first ecstatic notes of the harp are like the arrows of the first sun's rays that infuse character and life in the waiting earth. The intensity and freedom of the singing, enhanced by the talent for improvising verses, convey the domination and at the same time the harmony that the people of Veracruz feel with respect to their land.

No wonder that Cortés and his followers were impressed with this green and perfumed fairyland, peopled with graceful, almond-eyed Totonacs whose exquisite Asiatic features and warm



Photo Mayo

The bamba! Characteristic of Veracruz, the lively, graceful dance is performed by both sophisticates and peasants. Guitars and oversize harp form the combo.

Photo Héctor García





bronze skin displayed a strange culture whose secrets defied the brusque European frankness of the invading seekers of treasure. The *veracruzano* of today is a mixture of the descendants of some of these and later Spanish settlers with Indian peoples of the region, plus a later and very important infusion of African slave workers whose special cultural and personal qualities did much to form the extraordinary present-day character of these people.

Their ingenuous simplicity, frankness and generosity; colorful way of handling language; instant friendliness towards outsiders who show the least bit of liking and understanding; great ability in all manual tasks; a mental agility which shows itself in all social classes (the last two presidents have been *veracruzanos*) — these are some of the qualities of the people of Veracruz: Indian, African and Spanish, with a sprinkling of Arab, French and American.

Existing Indian music in Veracruz, for the most part, has been strongly modified by European influences. *Los Negritos* and *Los Hua-Huas* are two dances, undoubtedly of pre-Hispanic origin, but now unrecognizable in comparison with what we believe to be their original form, and are accompanied by a violin and one or more six-string guitars.

The most interesting Indian dance of the state of Veracruz one finds in the inland town of Papantla (although it is danced in other towns in the adjacent part of the state of Puebla), an authentic Totonac Indian center where the nights are filled with the fragrance of vanilla flowers and orange blossoms, and whose *zócalo*, adorned with tropical trees and flowers and beautifully decorated mosaic tile benches, is one of the most charming in Mexico. It is a ritual dance whose preparation is complicated, long and arduous, from the choosing of a tall, straight tree of the proper characteristics, around which a religious rite is performed that involves the sacrifice of certain animals to propitiate ancient nature gods and to insure that the tree will stand the test. The tree is then cut (it must be about 100 feet high), brought from the forest to the main churchyard and put up in a deep hole. A spiral rope ladder is strung up along its length and a small round

(Continued on page 22)



Photo Anne Kelly

This ship, tied to the old prison island of San Juan Ulúa, is berthed where the conquistadores' galleons first dropped anchor. Here the friendly Veracruz Indians, the Totonacs, brought them fruit and fowl and other hospitable presents. The main plaza of Veracruz, shown below, lined by sidewalk cafes, is the favorite club and theater of savvy *veracruzanos*.

Photo courtesy Cia. Mexicana de Aviación





Photos courtesy Papaloapan Commission.

**The Papaloapan Project:** Highways and modern suspension bridges like this one across the Río Blanco connect the base city, Ciudad Alemán, with the outside.

**Fresh coffee:** The middle Papaloapan raises excellent coffee and this woman is busily grinding her own.

**Delicacy of feature** is characteristic of the Indian peoples of this region.



## PAPALOAPAN

(Continued from page 9)

the use of new and, to them, sometimes startling agricultural and sanitary techniques. The inhabitants of the valley, Mazateco Indians for the most part, did not want to leave lands that their ancestors had tilled. Long-range planning meant nothing to them. The Papaloapan Commission had anticipated this, and staff members of the Instituto Indígena, experts in the handling of Indian cultures, were called in to do the explaining, persuading, research and re-educating.

The first villages posed difficult problems, but once one village was persuaded to move to higher ground and the other people of the valley learned of their new lands and homes, they were convinced that the strangers really meant to help them.

Transportation has long been one of the big problems of the valley. In the upper valley that extends into the state of Oaxaca the crop is corn; in the middle valley to the south they raise excellent coffee; and in the lower Papaloapan the soil is ideal for both sugar cane and tobacco, as well as tropical fruits. But for years the river was the only highway and many rich inland regions were unexploited. A good surfaced highway now connects Tlacotalpan with Cosamaloapan, Ciudad Alemán and La Tinaja with Córdoba, and from there to Mexico City.

Along with the control and use of the rivers will come effective use of the waters in irrigation as well as electrification, and canals and flumes carry water throughout the valley.

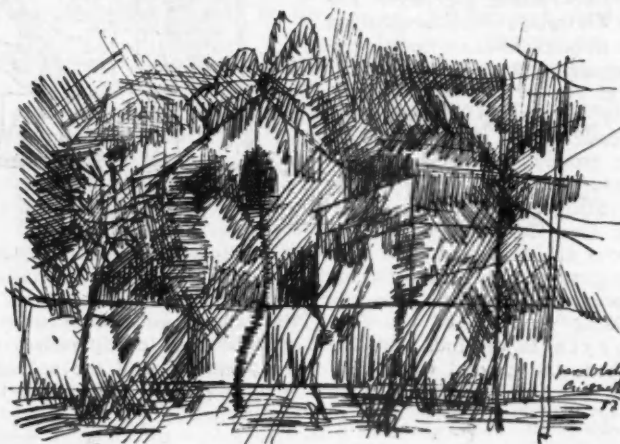
The Department of Agriculture works closely with the Commission and sends field workers throughout the valley to aid the resettled people and to instruct them in modern agricultural practices. The Anti-Malaria Commission also cooperates with the Papaloapan Commission.

The completion of the first dam last month marks a milestone indeed — a considerable milestone of imaginative planning and patient, determined execution. There are four more dams to be built. Miles of roads, and new canals. Schools. Waterworks. Hospitals. Plants. Progress is rapid, but the project — nothing less than the creation of what amounts to new country the size of a modern kingdom — will take many years.

## the arts

## Gironella

A young Mexican artist, Alberto Gironella is one of the serious painters of the generation of 1930. His forte is good taste, an elegant line, and dreamy color. Of late he has recaptured, and expertly, the techniques of the 19th century masters. His work is at present on exhibition at the Galería Proteo, Génova 39. The Chicago American, speaking of the exhibition of works of Mexican painters, held recently in the Main Street Gallery of that city, said of Gironella that he paints like a contemporary Rembrandt.



## of human laughter

(Continued from page 10)

scientific theories, the true answer turned out to be just normal human, and charmingly so. Three years ago a considerable deposit of these masks were found in Central Veracruz, near Tierra Blanca, many of them still attached to their "bodies," which turned out to be, flutes, whistles, rattles and ocarinas. What the Totonac artists who made these enchanting heads were trying to convey is what they do, most obviously, convey — namely, gaiety and laughter, and how masterfully they did it is evident in the few photographs we reproduce here.

Music, laughter, dance, or in other words fun and games in general, were associated with the god of flowers and other fine crops, whose full name was Xochipilli Macuilxochitl. He is generally portrayed cross-legged, holding bouquets in both hands, and smiling very happily indeed.

Although the Totonac heads belong to a different culture (Macuilxochitl was a god especially revered by the highland *Mexica*, also known as the

Aztecs), they express the general idea of springtra-la-la celebrated as a rule, at the beginning of the rains. In mood, however, they express what seems to have been the year-round attitude of the Totonacs, a friendly, joking, merry-making sort of people.

The Smiling Heads were made, so far as one can tell from the very small amount of accurate information available, beginning somewhere around the year 200 A. D. and for several hundred years thereafter. Both male and female figures are represented. They wore necklaces, decorated chest bands, holiday breechcloths or skirts, and fancy earrings. On their foreheads are symbols: herons, monkeys, pelicans, plumed serpents, or abstract designs. The classic "Smiling Head" has a very wide forehead, probably a portrayal of the type of human beauty that the Mayas and other peoples aimed at, by trying to train the skull, in babyhood, into a slope-back shape.

It could be reasonably supposed that they are, indeed, figures of dancers and of priests and priestesses dedicated to the cult of Macuilxochitl or in general, celebration of fine things including human merriment for its own sake.



## this is veracruz

(Continued from page 19)

moving platform is fixed at the top in such a way that it can turn freely.

After the dancers have made a solemn procession around the base of the pole, four of them climb up to the top and tie their feet to the ends of long ropes that have been fixed to points on the moving platform. The musician, who plays simultaneously a three-hole flute made of *carrizo* (something like cornstalk) and a small drum hung on the end of the flute, also climbs to the top and, standing on the small round platform, high above the ground, begins to play his strange mournful tunes, facing in turn the four cardinal points of the compass. The four "flying birds" — the dancers who are waiting on the edge of the platform — plunge into the air and the platform begins to turn, the ropes holding the feet of the four dancers begin to unwind, lowering them towards the ground while they spin, hung head downwards, around the pole.

The musician, unperturbed, continues playing his invocation to the gods, still standing on the platform which is now rotating with the downward course of the "flying bird" dancers. There are no safety nets. If a dancer's rope breaks or the musician



loses his balance, that's it. (See MTM, June 1955, for pictures.)

The present-day Veracruz music is the expression of three cultures. Much of it is based on Spanish dances like the *fandango* and the *seguidillas*, developed probably during the 18th century.

Specially built guitars called *jaranas* accompany these tunes. They have eight or ten strings, are small, thin, finely proportioned, and have a sweet, penetrating sound which lends itself admirably to the accompaniment of the harp. The stroking of these guitars is, in most *sones*, extremely fast and complicated, with precise and beautiful rhythmic counterpoint. The *requinto* is built along similar lines to the *jarana*, but has only four gut strings, is played with a long, flexible cow-horn pick, and is used for counter-melodies in a lower range than the harp, or sometimes in place of the harp.

In some parts of the coast, the tambourine and violin are used to give rhythmic or harmonic accompaniment, respectively. The dancers don't move their bodies at all above the waist, giving vent to the tremendous excitement of the *zapateado* in the superb footwork which makes another counterpoint against the rhythms of the instruments, and really constitutes another musical instrument in itself.

For listings of some Veracruz music available on records, see Directory.

## In a General Motors Car

because General Motors—with  
115 service dealers in all important cities,  
is at home throughout the Republic

mexico:  
unmapped  
literary  
territory

by Donald Demarest

Any map of the literary world compiled by an Anglo Saxon would look like one of those extraordinary Mercator projections drawn up by a general or a salesman of galoshes. An enormous red balloon to the north would crowd a slightly smaller blue-tinted one to the east, with a few varicolored bubbles on the fringes. Down in the bottom third would be a yellow bulbous monstrosity like a pawnbroker's symbol, trailing away into a thin wisp of nothingness.

The red zeppelin, of course, is England from Beowulf to John Braine; the blue giant is France from Corneille to Camus; the satellites include Germany, Russia, Italy, Greece, Iceland, Tangiers and the Island of Majorca. The three golden balls at the bottom are labelled by States rather than individual names: Massachusetts, Mississippi and California. But the thin squiggle going off the page into Latin America subtly resembles a train of powder.

I guess no visitor to a foreign country comes so ill-prepared by his reading as the English-speaking tourist making his first trip to Mexico. Whether his anticipations include the *sie-sta-ing* peons of the comic strips or the pistoleros and revolutionaries of the paper backs; Lawrence's Back-to-Queztalcoatl fascists or Greene's whisky priests or Lowry's upper-crust alcoholics; the saccharine sweet village of women of Steinbeck's *Pearl* or the

chile-and-tequila prostitutes of Cain's *Serenade*... the visitor will be surprised (perhaps disappointed) in the Mexican reality.

About the only convincing fictional portraits in English of Mexicans are in the stories by Katherine Ann Porter, *Flowering Judas* (Modern Library, New York). That is until the publication recently of Warren Eyster's *The Goblins of Eros* (Random House, New York). Eyster, who has spent some time in Mexico (six months living with the Huicholes in Nayarit and two years in Mexico City serving a part-time apprenticeship in translating the new Mexican writers), who is married to a Mexican and whose daughter was born here, has written a novel that in construction is something like a patchwork quilt — but whose patches are made of solidly Mexican characters: the bitter man of science Dr. Argello, the aristocratic hacienda-owning Romeros, the maid Josefina, the other Nayarit villagers of "Las Iguanas". In theme the book has something in common with Juan Rufo's *Pedro Paramo* (and even has a character called Pedro Paro): a young man's searching return to his dead mother's village. But it is painted on a larger canvas.

If the fiction is misleading, the non-fictional accounts of Mexico by gringos are scarcely less so. Whether you prefer Tannenbaum's *Mexico: The Struggle for Peace and Bread* or Bishop Schlarman's *Mexico: Land of Volcanoes* will depend on your politics and your religion. Most Anglo-Saxon writers on Mexico seem more concerned with suggesting solutions to Mexican problems than with true understanding.

Some of the most fantastic books about Mexico are those by intellectual travelers. The English, especially, who are generally such wise and witty wanderers elsewhere, invariably come a cropper in Mexico. D. H. Lawrence, who had such a fine feeling for Italy in *The Sea and Sardinia*, alternates in

(Continued on page 24)



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## mexico: unmapped literary territory

(Continued)

*Mornings in Mexico* between sentimental adulation and suspicion of the Noble Indian. Aldous Huxley, generally an astute guide to art and folklore, finds nothing *Beyond the Mexique Bay*, from the danzantes to the pyramids, that is worth a second glance. Graham Greene, after a promising introduction (that is perhaps one of his best short stories) turns *The Lawless Roads* — an overt attempt to analyze the religious conflict of the late '30s — into one long "Oh to Be in England!" whine, that is self-pityingly blind to almost all aspects of Mexican culture and life. A key passage is Greene's reaction to Palenque which ends: "It seemed to me that this wasn't a country to live in at all with the heat and desolation; it was a country to die in and leave only ruins behind."

Of course the best introduction to Mexican mores and character — one written with the wit of a Huxley and the penetration a Lawrence failed to bring down here and the style Evelyn Waugh failed to call on is his querulous book about Mexico — is *El Laberinto de la Soledad* by Octavio Paz (Cuadernos Mexicanos, México). With all its poet's concern for "liquor, love and fights," this is a book that could appeal not only to tourists but to any Anglo-Saxon aficionado of fine prose.

Of course very few Anglo-Saxon visitors come here with any knowl-

edge of Mexican literature. Even if (a fairly rare thing) they have much familiarity with Spanish, and Spanish and Latin American letters, they will tend to be ignorant of the Mexican classics: Alarcón, Sor Juana, López Velarde — to say nothing of the contemporaries from Reyes, Torri, Pellicer, to Octavio Paz and the young writers, who are beginning to produce a literary renaissance which this writer thinks will rival the painting renaissance of the '30s (or the more



fashionable literary *risorgimientos* of Italy in the late '40s and Japan in the '50s).

For one thing, very little of this work has been translated into English. Lizardi's *Itching Parrot* — the first novel written and published in this hemisphere, in 1816 — was translated by the perceptive Miss Porter for Doubleday in the '30s, but is out of print. Something of Reyes, and several of the revolutionary novels, were published in the States to a dull thud of critical and sales reception. An ineptly bowdlerized and cut version of J. J. Romero's *La Vida Inútil de Pito Pérez* appeared in an anthology called *Fiesta in November*; Dudley Fitts included some serviceable translations of several important Mexican poets in his *New Directions* anthology of Latin American verse. Robert Graves in a recent book (*The Crowning Privilege*) ran a tribute to Sor Juana that included a few good translated examples of her poetry. But mostly, even in anthologies of Latin American writing, Mexico has been scanted. Perhaps because Mexico is too close to the U.S.



and too far from Europe to be taken seriously.

The new note in Mexican writing — at once both more international and more indigenous than anything that has been done here before — probably springs from the young playwrights, Sergio Magaña and Emilio Carballido and Luisa Josefina Hernández. (Although the three poets of the Auden, Spender, MacNeice generation — Gorostiza, Villaurrutia and Paz — have been a vital influence.) However, at the moment, the most fruitful tendency, in terms of world letters, seems to be in fiction: in the branching out of splendid short story writers into major novels.

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Carballido has written some good stories. Magaña did an interesting novel, *El Molino de Aire*, Srta. Hernández has produced an extraordinarily subtle and powerful novel, *El Lugar donde crece la Hierba* (so far unpublished); and Carlos Fuentes is finishing a novel about Mexico City life, *El Región más Transparente del Aire*, which is an ambitious attempt to do for his native city something of what Joyce did for Dublin and Dos Passos for Manhattan.

However, the two most recognized, and hotly discussed, young standard-bearers of Mexican fiction at the moment are Juan Rulfo and Juan José Arreola. The first, after publishing a book of extraordinary vignettes of provincial life, *El Llano el Llamas* (Letras Mexicanas, México), came up with a novel, *Pedro Paramo* (Letras Mexicanas), which may be one of the most charged and vital works of fiction that Mexico has yet produced. The latter (who is said to have torn up a novel in progress because its theme was too close to Rulfo's) is the unsurpassed master of the peculiarly Mexican short story form. This form which comes from Spain, and has flowered in Argentina under the brilliant Borjes — and which in Mexico was developed in their different ways by López Velarde, Julio Torri and Octavio Paz, before Arreola, into a typically Mexican thing — is at its best in the short-short. A two or three page piece, which combines a wild humor with intense precision of language, a macabre fantasy with close observation of everyday life (with often a twist in the tail that is more suggestively Kafkian than mechanically O. Henry), this could be a genre that might significantly influence Anglo-Saxon writing.

At any rate several examples will appear in English translation in the anthologies of contemporary Mexican writing that the *Evergreen Review* and the Centro Mexicano de Escritores are now preparing. The little fuse running off the literary map could lead to an explosion that will make the rest of the world wake up to the literary (as well as archaeological and plastic) riches Beyond the Mexique Bay.



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Benjamin Franklin Library, Niza 53.

Central Balneológica, San Juan de Le-trán 24. Free information on Mexican spas and health resorts.

Mexico City Daily Bulletin, Gómez Farías 41. Tel. 16-69-60. General tourist information.

Mexican-North American Cultural Institute, Hamburgo 115. Tel. 25-16-54, 25-16-55, 25-16-56.

National Tourist Department, Juárez 89. General travel information.

PEMEX Travel Club, Juárez 89. Highway information. Publishes an excellent auto travel bulletin in English.

The News, Morelos 4. Tel. 21-23-35, 46-63-04, 46-68-40. Worldwide and Mexican news, with UP, AP, INS coverage, US columnists and comics.

## stops along the cortés trail

### Hotels

Vera Cruz. Hotel Las Diligencias, on the plaza. Traditional atmosphere; air-conditioned rooms available. Hotel Emporio: modern with some air-conditioned rooms. Hotel Mocambo: south of the city on the beach; a resort hotel.

Jalapa. Hotel Salmones: modern, first-class. Hotel Mexico: clean and reasonable without frills.

Tlaxcala. Hotel Tlaxcala: small hotel with swimming pool.

Puebla. Hotel Colonial, centrally located. Hotel Agua Azul: just outside city; swimming pool fed from hot sulfur springs.

### Restaurants

Vera Cruz. Most of the restaurants around the main plaza are good.

## NIGHT SPOTS



El Eco, Sullivan 43. Exciting jazz sessions. Negro artists from New Orleans improvise Dixie Jazz, Be-Bop, Rock and Roll. Dancing, restaurant and bar service every night. No minimum.

Las Catacumbas, Callejón de Dolores 5. Night club on the spooky side. No minimum.

Bar Latino, Reforma 292. Restaurant-bar presenting the quintet of Mario Padrón every night; out-of-this-world jazz. No minimum.

El Paseo, Reforma 146. Restaurant-bar with international cuisine. Music. No minimum.

Gitanerías, Av. Oaxaca and Puebla. Restaurant-bar; Spanish singers, dancers and musicians. No minimum.

Picos Pardos, Dinamarca 13. This is a pleasant bar with a folklore band that interprets the music of Veracruz. No minimum.

Ay Cocula, Melchor Ocampo almost at the corner of Alfonso Herrera. Restaurant offering Mexican food specialties and Mexican music by the Mariachi Vargas.

La Fuente, Insurgentes 890. Restaurant-bar and night club with continuous music and a good floor show. No minimum.

La Terraza, Insurgentes and Av. Colonia del Valle. Restaurant night club. Good orchestras from 6 pm; international floor show at night.

Los Globos, Insurgentes 810. Restaurant-bar with good food in pleasant surroundings. Continuous music and entertainment.

Quid, Puebla 152. Restaurant-bar, international cuisine. Presenting the popular Mexican songstress Elvira Ríos every night; pianist Pepe Jaramillo and organist Nacho García from 9 pm.

Prendes, across the square from the Hotel Las Diligencias, is exceptional. Most famed dish: red snapper Veracruz style.

**Jalapa.** The restaurant of the Hotel Salmenes offers a good Spanish



cuisine, as does the Restaurante Don Quijote, along with tasty regional dishes.

**Tlaxcala.** The Hotel Tlaxcala has both bar and restaurant.

**Puebla.** The food at both the Hotel Colonial and the Agua Azul is good, but the two best restaurants in town are on the main plaza: the Ritz on the southeastern corner, and the Royalty, across the street from the northwest corner.

#### Shopping

**Veracruz.** Spanish combs hand-carved from conch shells. Orchids and cigars. Snakeskin purses and straw hats. Just sit at a sidewalk cafe and the market will come to you.

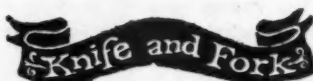
**Jalapa.** This is coffee country and one member of our staff buys green beans which she later toasts in an iron skillet and then grinds to make, she says, coffee that tastes as good as it smells. They sell a special candy there made by local nuns. You can find it at most of the little *puestos* and candy stores. Raw vanilla (in the bean) is sold along the highway and in some small stands. The nearby town of Coatepec specializes in tasty liqueurs made from coffee and local fruit.

**Tlaxcala.** All sorts of hand-woven woolen materials that compare favorably with good English homespuns.

**Puebla.** No one who knows what's here ever passes through Puebla without taking on a supply of a candy made from sweet potato that is sold at almost all of the little sidewalk

stands that surround the main plaza. And, of course, this is the home of famous Puebla majolica ware.

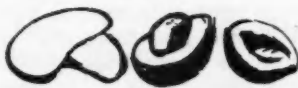
**Added:** For those of you who have not been able to find a hammock along the route, they can be found in Mexico City at El Fuerte del Palmar, Venustiano Carranza 115, and at the Chimalpopoca, Luis Moya 19. The rough fiber hammocks run about 25 pesos, the softer cotton ones sell for about 65. If you plan to do any lounging in swim suits, buy the cotton; the others scratch.



### fish and beans in veracruz

Perhaps the general *ambiente* of Veracruz has something to do with the stimulation of one's appetite down there, but there's no denying that the Jarocho cuisine has a quality of its own.

Seafood is a commonplace in any seaport, and *huachinango* (red snapper) is a superb fish anywhere, but *huachinango veracruzano* is an experience. Even a lesser fish gains qual-



ity in the rich, brothy sauce, filled with tomatoes, onions, garlic, *cilantro*, sesame and who knows what other herbs. And there is a gamey little fish dipped in batter and fried in deep fat that doesn't need any sauce at all. And crabs — be sure to ask for *jaina* crabs — dropped alive in boiling water and served with lemon and drawn butter, delicately touched with chile, are delicious. Fish of one kind or another may show up in all kinds of dishes, even a bowl of chicken soup. Then oysters — you haven't really appreciated oysters until you stand at the booth of a waterfront

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vendor and eat them fresh from the  
sea, sprinkled with powdered red chile.

Small, tasty Veracruz shrimp may  
be fried in deep fat, boiled in the fa-  
mous *veracruzana* sauce, or added to  
ordinary Mexican rice to make it ex-  
traordinary. It is a tradition in Vera-  
cruz that all good Jarochos must eat  
dried shrimp at least once a day dur-  
ing Holy Week. There is something  
in the drying process that gives the  
delicate shrimp a special gaminess  
that is accented by the thick, spicy  
sauce in which it is served.

Even the fruits in the market place  
seem to have grown with a special  
exuberance — huge royal *zapote*, avo-  
cados 15 inches around, red bananas  
as big as German sausages and the  
best cooking bananas in the world.  
But the real, typical Veracruz dessert  
is *cocada* — fresh grated coconut, boil-  
ed with milk and sugar until it comes  
out a rich, creamy paste. It takes  
three or four hours to boil it to the  
right consistency.

However, the staple of life is Ve-  
racruz black beans, which all good  
*veracruzanos* eat three times a day.  
They are probably the best beans in  
the world. Of course, all beans should  
be cooked in an earthen *olla*, and if  
possible over a charcoal fire. But  
there is more than that to Veracruz  
black beans. The thing that makes  
them unique seems to be cooking them  
— and eating them — in Veracruz.  
You can buy the best black beans in  
Veracruz, bring them to the city, cook  
them in the same kind of *olla* in the  
same way the Jarochos do, and —  
well, they are still wonderful beans,  
but they are no longer Veracruz beans.  
Yes, the *ambiente* of Veracruz does  
extend to its cuisine.

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La Petenera ..... CM 1108, P 2643



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El Gusto P 3558, V 70-9311, V 70-7504, C 1853  
La Huasanga, La Rosa ..... P 3572, P 3836  
El Caimán, El Aguanieve ..... P 3703  
Cielito Lindo ..... P 2643, CM 810  
La Leva (\*accompaniment with guita-  
rra huapanguera)\* C 2179, P 2741, V 70-7504  
El Llorar, El Cuervo ..... C 2392, V 70-9342  
La Media Bamba, El Huasteco ..... P 4284  
La Sirena, El Jojocapeño ..... P 4075

### Huapangos Jarochos or Sones

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El Ahualulco ..... V 70-7538, C 1710, P 3657  
El Jarabe Veracruzano ..... V 70-9331  
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El Conejo, El Canelo ..... P 4196  
El Cupido, María Chuchena ..... P 4293  
El Pájaro Cu ..... P 3657  
El Paloma ..... C 2507  
El Toro de las Bajadas, La Bruja ... P 4379  
El Tilingo Lingo ..... CM 642  
Son de la Carretilla, La Yerbabuena . C 2474  
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